PRIEST in RHIME;

AN

EPISTLE

TO THE

Rev. and Learned Mr. BR——WA——R,

CONCERNING THE

Preſentation of Mr. H——s to the LIVING of AL——NE——LE, in Northamptonſhire, &c. &c.

Quænam ſumma boni? Mens quæ ſibi conſcia recti.

PERSIUS AUS.

Vivitur ex rapto: —— OVID.

O clear him then from this offence,
Thy love, thy duty, prove;
Reſtore him with that innocence,
Which firſt inſpir'd my love.

OPERA OF ARTAX.

LONDON:

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MDCCLXVII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following letter fell into my poſſeſſion by an accident, which, tho' ſingular, yet no way concerning the reader, would be needleſs to mention. By ſeveral paſſages therein, I was led to think, that the author was no leſs a man than the Reverend and Celebrated Mr. G. W—TE—D.[X] Under this perſuaſion, I accordingly equipped it with a title, and ſuitable mottos; and have now offered to the Public (tho' I would preſume without offence to either them or the writer) as an haſty production. The reader, if he cannot ſatisfy himſelf with reſpect to the author, may, after peruſal, think of Dr. D—d, or ſome other great poet among the clergy or laity, and ſuit himſelf to his mind: *Provided always nevertheleſs*, that he is careleſs in his enquiry concerning

—— Ovid.

The EDITOR.

[X] No. Dost George Whitefield.

THE PRIEST in RHIME.

YOU'LL think it ſtrange, and tell me ſo
(For Br—w—r is *ſincere* I know)
That in this trying painful time,
Thy friend ſhou'dſt dreſs his thoughts in rhime;
You'll ſay, perhaps, I'm gone aſtray,
Like Billy D——d, in open day;
Leaving with joy and eager eyes,
Expounding ſacred things and wiſe;
For what he never can attain,
Tho' much deſir'd,——a Poet's name:——

That ſpiritual hymns and ſongs divine,
Need no indulgence from the Nine;
Where the bright ſubject tow'ring high,
Shall meaner requiſites ſupply;
But in familiar things, fine verſe
And wit, true poets interſperſe.
This, and no doubt as much ag'in,
Perhaps it may be reckon'd *Sin*;
Will ſoon be told me, I ſuppoſe,
For writing rhime inſtead of proſe.
No matter; 'tis no whim: I chuſe
Thus to engage a ready muſe; —
Since (tho' *I* can't complain) I've found,
That Truth in proſe forgets her ground;
And, by loud bawling Falſhood preſs'd,
Hath more than once been much diſtreſs'd.
No wonder then that I who fight,
And ſearch for Truth both day and night;
Should take the fitter way to ſhow her,
To ſuch as doubting may not know her.
Abdera's laughing ſage would tell,
She lov'd the bottom of a well;

From whence ſhe ſeldom would appear,
Or never, more than once a year.
But now ſhe comes, and ſweet and clean,
With courteous look and graceful mien,
Diſtinguiſh'd ſtill from any other,
As blooming Virtue's heavenly mother;
Deſcending from that hoary ſage,
Which we call Time, but others Age.
Behold *Aſtræa* by her ſide
(Truth often is *Aſtræa*'s guide)
She ſeems diſtreſs'd; I know the cauſe,
Is foul abuſe from Tommy ——. Heaven's
Juſtice we all ſhou'd richly prize,
She comes from reaſon and the ſkies;
Long as earth ſtands and billows role,
Will ſhe befit the virtuous ſoul.
Juſtice no ſervile laws can bind,
She ſtill above them, is, we find;
And oft when clam'rous lawyers baul,
She takes her flight from Hickes's Hall.
Juſtice is never at a ſtand,
To offer all her ready hand;

Whene'er

Whene'er ſhe finds her aid is wanted,
Nor ſtops tho' oft by bribes ſhe's haunted.
Diſtreſs, ſometimes, will cry aloud,
Among the buſy careleſs croud;
Which Juſtice tho' ſhe ſore may grieve,
Can never to her wiſh relieve;
Becauſe her tender careful guide,
Immortal truth was call'd aſide.
Thus, Br—w—r, in our preſent caſe,
No features plainer on your face;
Than that fair truth hath bid adieu,
To M—d—n juſt to viſit you.
M—d—n has told us where ſhe is,
Then why, my friend, are you remiſs?
Perhaps ſhe may be gone, you'll ſay,
Nor do you know exact which way:
She may be near and diſtant too,
Who correſpondence held with you.

I WOU'D not here be thought to be,
The buſy man's epitome;
To other's buſineſs ever prone,
And yet neglectful of my own:

This is, you know, no ſlight affair,
No news that dies with evening's air;
Truth, Juſtice, Conſcience, all appear;
Religion too may ſuffer here.
Will men believe that all is right,
When actions fear to ſee the light;
Tho' injur'd innocence calls loud,
And expectation from the croud
Of ſtanders-by, knows only you,
Can wind off this entangled clew.
'Tis you can vindicate the fame
Of M——n, and reſtore his name;
'Tis you can cloſe detraction's jaws,
And make an honeſt man of ——;
Or, on the other hand, you can,
Say K—p—n is an *injur'd* man.
Come forth then e'er it be too late,
And be the ruler of his fate;
Bare ev'ry circumſtance to view,
Nor fear what angry men can do:
Let Truth and Juſtice be your theme,
And high, I truſt, of both you deem.

Be bold, my friend, in virtue's cauſe
Aſſert her liberties and laws.
* " Who friendſhip with a knave has made,
" Is judg'd a partner in his trade;
Prove then in haſte your innocence,
Severeſt virtue's beſt defence.
Conſider, in the world, ſome men,
Will, whilſt you thus reſtrain your pen;
Say even you had bad intent,
And that your ſilence gives conſent.
Others no longer will refrain,
Sacred religion to profane;
Or which is equally ſiniſter,
Abuſe the name of her miniſter.

Methinks I hear a wicked elf,
Corrected in his ſpiteful ſelf;
Thus, at ſome coffee-houſe or club,
Haranguing each attentive cub.

' Lord bleſs us, what a mighty pother,
' Theſe parſons make with one another;
' Are thoſe the men ſent down on earth,
' To give us all an heavenly birth;

* Gay.

When here is like to be a breach,
Becauſe a brother won't *impeach?*
Are we from them the truth to learn,
When 'tis ſo far from their concern,
That *one* advances—*one* denies it,
And *one* ſhall prove that *one* belies it?
The real fact how can we ſcan?
In ſhort, there's ſcarcely faith in man;
For ſuch as we are told to learn by,
We're much more likely to get harm by.
Theſe are your men of ſenſe and light,
Who have the gift of ſecond ſight,
And keep up ſuch an horrid din,
They change the name but hug the ſin.
Endeav'ring to perſuade, agen,
That ſinners old become new men;
They, under that diſguiſe, go free,
And cheat with greater liberty.
They all of their own church reſpect,
But ev'ry other man ſuſpect;
Pretending, tho' in reaſon odly,
A Licence to defraud th' ungodly.

'A Brother's lie they all will own,
'And ſwear to, as it were their own.
'Miſchief at firſt began with—Lord,
'But *Simony*, is now the word.
'I know a ſubtle wheedling cull,
'For whom a Jew would be too dull;
'Who preaches meekneſs to controul,
'And fleece the poor believing foul;
'With words of terror and diſmay,
'That he for pard'ning grace may pay.
'He never preaches from a book,
'As not accuſtom'd there to look;
'Tho' takes a text, but whilſt you ſeek it,
'Ne'er thinks himſelf oblig'd to keep it.
'When in his trembling pious frame,
'He thunders forth ſome odd nick name;
'Each louſy gipſy, to the thump
'Of cuſhion ſhrugs, and drops a trump;
'And tho' ſhe underſtands no ſentence,
'She's ſure he preaches up repentance;
'For juſt before he knew that Kate,
'Had pick'd a pocket for the plate.

Since thus religion's made a cant,
A bargain, for each impious cant;
How can the falſe from true be ſhown?
Had they not blab'd, cou'd we have known?
We thought that even theſe had been,
Men upright, juſt; as free from ſin
As their profeſſion, ſolemn looks,
Their ſpecious ſermons, gait and books.
But gain we ſee has mighty pow'r,
To try the faith of man each hour;
And ſordid gain is ſtill the rule
Of right, for either knave or fool.

'THERE is an odd quaint term in uſe,
For methodiſtical abuſe;
Prophaning ſacred ordinances,
With ſporting phraſe and jockey fancies;
A phraſe adapted to the ſenſe,
And ſuiting ev'ry one's expence;
For great and ſmall think little ſin,
To practice this ——) *to take you in.*——
This phraſe in common acceptation,
Requires but little explanation;

'But,

'But, in an holy brother's mouth,
'Is us'd inſtead of North for South.
'Tho', might we judge from actions here,
'I think it plainly wou'd appear,
'That—*taken in*——by prieſt or knave,
'You ſcarce an half idea ſave;
'Nay, if you 'mong the learned ſeek,
'You'll find *no* difference in the Greek.

'Now ſince theſe jugling tricks we know,
'What does religion undergo!
'Religion here in truth is made,
'The means to carry on a trade;
'And yet a trade ſo very ſtrange,
'As ne'er was heard of on the 'Change.
'Hypocriſy in young men old,
'As he who firſt his Saviour ſold.
'Hypocriſy they know as well,
'Will ſerve their turn to buy and ſell,
'As fervent zeal, in church or ſtate,
'And oftner at an eaſy rate.

'I've heard when one defrauds another,
'To tell him, that were he his brother,

'He'd given him the ſame advice,
'Nor offer'd e'er a better price.
'Perhaps there may be truth in this,
'Since he by all might do amiſs.
'But rather, if he couſin ſaid,
'I ſhou'd believe what oath he made;
'When ſwearing, were you couſin Dutch,
'I wou'd have couzen'd you as much.

'Yet ſee we, but I know not why,
'Prieſthood has privilege to lie;
'And ſtill go on, from day to day,
'And he believ'd in all they ſay;
'Whilſt plenty barking in their eye,
'Shall well the want of grace ſupply.
'Behold with what a godly mien,
'They ſtrut behind a double chin:
'See how they loiter like away,
'And bloſſom as their years decay;
'Not thinking what they muſt expect,
'If one ſoul's loſt by their neglect.
'Since then ſuch things are done in ſight,
'Enough to put all faith to flight;

'Is

'Is't not enough to make us think,
'Religion is on falſhood's brink.'
Thus will ſome forward lad declaim,
And think each miniſter the ſame;
Whilſt one more candid than another,
Shall only draw our wretched brother:
But cover what he deems his crimes,
As done in the Utopean times.
Lo under favour of the preſs,
We ſee him thus the croud addreſs.

'WANT you a man to pray and preach,
'Yet not to practice what he'll teach;
'To ſet good works at loud defiance,
'And place, on faith alone, reliance;
'To vaunt with hypocritic face,
'The all-ſufficiency of grace;
'To frighten all your pariſh round,
'With death and judgment's awful ſound;
'Ghoſtly advice to give your neighbours,
'And pick their pockets for his labours;
'But damn, by wholeſale, who refuſe,
'Their mite, their all, to him, for dues;

Th

The good *Sanctoſo* is your man:
Sanctoſo——match him if you can!
Want you a man——*to ſtand in gaps*,——
To ſave your livings from a lapſe;
And, when expected to reſign,
Plead *Simony*, and laws divine:
A man, whoſe flinty ſtubborn heart,
Eſtrang'd to ev'ry tender part,
Can view with a relentleſs eye,
The griefs of an whole family;
Pining with hunger, want, diſtreſs,
Variety of wretchedneſs;
Himſelf the author of their woe,
Conſcious himſelf that he is ſo;
That they're the dupes of his chicane,
The bubbles of his wily brain;
And almoſt at his mercy lie,
Whether, at laſt, they live or die?
Your man's *Sanctoſo*——*out and out*——
Has he an equal? ſearch about!
He has, indeed,—and I cou'd name him——
But then he'd ſay, that——I defame him *.

* The editor ſuppoſes this character was ſent to a public print without the author's knowledge. See London Chronicle, 27 Oct.

So thus whilſt one a portrait draws,
Another damns the *good old cauſe*;
And ſets forth all methodic teachers,
As men diſhoneſt, filthy leachers:
Pretending all our feaſts of love,
With carnal joys are hand and glove.
So *Foote*, that imp of Belzebub,
When preſent at ſome nightly club,
Hath often, with an impious face,
Thus ſcandaliz'd us ſons of grace;
And ſtill, damnation to purſue,
Blaſphemes in *Squintum*, you know who.

For me, I'd freely all things take,
And ſuffer death for conſcience ſake.
Conſcience, which like a faithful friend,
Shall thro' each gloomy vale attend,
O'er craggy rocks, and rolling billow,
And chear at laſt the dying pillow;
Gladly I'd honors, crowns, reſign,
And dwell content, ſince thou art mine.
Conſcience owes nought to human laws,
Nor can in courts be made a cauſe;

In caſes of religious nature,
An higher power muſt judge the matter.
So, Br—w—r, if to life's fair end,
This Conſcience is a boſom friend;
Tho' undeſerv'd You ſlander hear,
You'll live in hope, nor, dying, fear.

Conscience has often been the ſport,
Of men of wit, and bad report;
Been liken'd, by a prieſt of riches,
To eaſy cloth or worſted breeches;
Which tho' to *naſtineſs* and *lewdneſs*,
All over are of equal goodneſs;
Yet ſtill, in country or in town,
For *both* are eaſily ſlipt down.
But Conſcience, if I rightly ween,
May in conſiſtency be ſeen;
And ev'ry man this maxim ſuits,
'Judge ye, and know him by his fruits.'—

By ſad experience, yet we find,
That there's no caſement in the mind;
Where one might take a peep and ſee,
How far men's thoughts and words agree.

O, were

O, were but each man's boſom glaſs,
How few for honeſt men would paſs!
Seldom wou'd circumventing friends,
In ſuch a caſe, obtain their ends.
No man alive, need then, with pain,
Of ſecret enemies complain;
Each wou'd, with truth, know whom t'accuſe,
And none but fools their breaſts wou'd bruize.
K—p—n, no doubt, wou'd never then,
Have been oblig'd to draw his pen;
To tell the world how great a ſhock,
His frame receiv'd when at the ——
H——s told him (ſhame to faith divine!)
He ne'er intended to reſign;
Till ſome fat living offer'd better,—
Which he'd inform him of by letter.
O words of grief to deep diſtreſs,
Unknowing how to get redreſs!
For well he knew, as well as H——s,
That full poſſeſſion by all laws
(Divine excepted) diſappoints
His ev'ry ſtep—for 'tis *twelve* points.

Thus

Thus the poor merchant when he makes,
Another venture ere he breaks;
Embarking with the crackling ropes,
The better to ſecure his hopes;
Exulting in ſome happy thought,
Of cent. per cent. for what he'd bought;
Is daſh'd ere morning on the ſhore,
And views his ſhip and goods no more.

FAIN wou'd my fond indulging heart,
Think M—d—n acts an honeſt part;
But ſpite of all my prepoſſeſſion,
I'm ſtagger'd by his own confeſſion;
I fear that he, like men on ice,
Is ſcating down the ways of vice;
But if I wrong this quondam friend,
'Tis you my error muſt amend;
Tho' was this caſe of K—p—n's mine,
H——s ſhould immediately reſign;
For if he thinks an arbitration,
Would juſtly make him quit his ſtation;
And like a r—gue refund his gains,
What muſt he be where he remains?)

I'd ſtrip my ſhirt off ere I'd ſee,
A miſerable family;
Nor e'er in pray'r or praiſe be found,
Till K—p—n had a thouſand pound;
The beſt pray'r here that can be given,
And moſt acceptable to heaven.
Let him do this, and I reſtore
Him to my favor, as before;
But on the failure I renounce him,
And leave the laity boys to trounce him.

THUS have I told you, as I choſe,
In limping rhime half verſe half proſe;
As well both what I'd have him do,
As what the world expects of you.
Take good advice then from an heart,
Intirely free from fraudful art;
Utter the truth with confidence,
And vindicate your innocence.
Leſt men ſuſpect that You went ſhare
With M—d—n, in this black affair;
And, like fell gamblers at the Sun,
(Whoſe ſafeſt play is *Three Poll one*;)

Have

Have all united thus to gleen,
And take the wretched K—p—n in.

O CURSED thirſt of tempting gold,
What bands of faith can lucre hold!
For howe'er large our golden ſtore,
Yet ſtill it craves a ſomething more.

WHENE'ER I ſee a mule with foal,
I think I ſpy a righteous ſoul;
And catching rabbits in the main,
Or crabs or lobſters on the plain;
Or finding oyſters on a tree,
I call 'em types of Honeſty.
The world's infected frauds prevail,
And Truth and Juſtice go to jail;
Freſh crimes ſpring up unknown before,
And ropes and gibbets fright no more.

THE END.

Have all united thus to glean,
And take the wretched K——p——n in.

O cursed thirst of tempting gold,
What bands of faith can here hold!
For howe'er large our golden store,
Yet fill it craves a something more.

Whene'er I see a mule with foal,
I think I spy a righteous soul;
And catching rabbits in the main,
Or crabs or lobsters on the plain;
Or finding oysters on a tree,
I call 'em types of Honesty.
The world's inbedded frauds prevail,
And Truth and Justice go to jail;
Fresh crimes spring up unknown before,
And fops and gibbets fright no more.

THE END.